



Photos by BRENT LEWIS/The Signal

Teaching pro David Velastro works with 2-year-old tennis player Harrison Thorne at Vista Ridge Tennis Courts. Harrison is following his two older brothers, Garrett, 15, and Griffen, 5, in the sport.

Is 2-year-old the next Agassi?

Thorne starts to play tennis at young age

By ROB WHEAT
Signal Staff Writer

VALENCIA — Andre Agassi, John McEnroe, Pete Sampras . . . Harrison Thorne?

Well maybe Thorne isn't quite ready to join the company of those tennis greats yet, but he may have a head start on the competition. Thorne is just 2 years old.

Thorne doesn't smash volleys with his forehand yet, but he's already under the instruction of a private coach, David Velastro. Thorne holds the racquet near the net, while the coach hurls tennis balls against it.

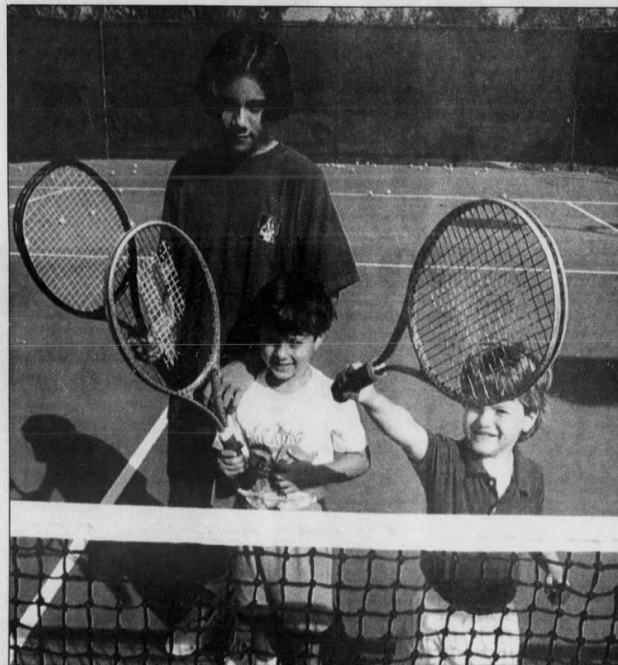
Hey, it worked for Thorne's older brother Griffen.

Griffen, 5, can return balls over the net from both the baseline and the net. Griffen also started young in tennis, and has shown rapid improvement according to his coach.

Both boys' practice time is limited to 10 to 20 minutes twice a week. They started playing tennis because they wanted to hit balls like their older brother Garrett.

Garrett, 15, is a freshman at Canyon High. He works with the same coach as his younger brothers, but also attends an exclusive tennis camp in Florida run by Agassi's former instructor, Nick Bolleteri.

But Robert Thorne, the boys' father, insists he isn't trying to mold professional tennis players out of his sons.



Thorne, an entertainment lawyer, is the agent for the two girl twins on the television show Full House. He said he can draw a parallel between them and his sons. "People ask if we're using them

to make a lot of money, but they really like to work," Robert Thorne said. "They miss being on the set of Full House, and sincerely enjoy what they do. I don't push these guys. They do it be-

cause they love to.

"Right now, the two younger boys just like hitting it around. I guess I figure if they're interested in this, why not see how far they can go?"

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